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Mapping the Northern Frontier: Canada and the Origins of the US Army's Military Information Division, 1885–1898

ROBERT G. ANGEVINE

In 1885, the United States Army established its first official peacetime intelligence organization, the Military Information Division (MID), at least in part to collect intelligence enabling it to strike Canada in the event of conflict with Great Britain. Examining MID's leadership, information collection methods, intelligence objectives, organizational structure, and officer recruitment criteria during its first dozen years of existence reveals that it devoted significant resources to mapping the Canadian border, restructured its organization in part to increase the efficiency of those scouting expeditions, and selected officers to lead MID and conduct its reconnaissance missions based on their topographical skills, their knowledge of Canada, and their ability to keep their work quiet.

Clandestine border crossings, plans to destroy key transportation and communication nodes in the event of war, embarrassing revelations of espionage activities in the press – all were hallmarks of the secret struggles between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Less well-known is that such episodes also characterized the US Army's attempts to gather information on Canada from 1885 to 1898. The army established its first official peacetime intelligence organization, the Military Information Division (MID), at least in part to collect intelligence enabling it to strike Canada in the event of conflict with Great Britain. Moreover, the creation of MID in 1885 marked a fundamental change in the conduct of American military intelligence and laid the foundation for later American intelligence agencies. Exploring the early history of MID thus illuminates not only the central role that Canada played in its origin, but also the methods, objectives, and culture of early intelligence organizations.

Standard explanations of the origins of MID overemphasize the importance of Europe in the thinking of the late nineteenth-century American military. Some historians have portrayed MID as part of an intellectual revival within the army inspired by European changes in

military tactics and organization. Others have claimed that Adjutant General Richard C. Drum created the organization after being unable to respond to the Secretary of War's request for information on the armed forces of a European power, possibly Russia.¹ Army leaders of the period, however, expressed little concern about involvement in European conflict. After learning in 1884 that transporting a large invasion force to the United States would require 75 per cent of all the shipping in Europe, Commanding General Philip H. Sheridan concluded that 'we should not be much alarmed except of our sea commerce and seaboard cities about foreign wars'.² In 1893, Major John B. Babcock, the head of MID, argued that 'it is almost impossible to conceive of any contingency arising which would necessitate the transportation of an army from our shores to wage war in the interior of Europe, and almost equally impossible to believe that any European force will ever penetrate into our own territory'. As a result, the US Army did not need perfect knowledge of the military geography of Europe, the orders of battle of European armies, or the war plans of European powers. The primary focus of MID with regard to Europe, Babcock argued, should be improvements in military technology, tactics, and training.³

Although American military leaders believed that entanglement in European struggles was unlikely, numerous disputes with Great Britain and its North American proxy, Canada, during the years following the Civil War made conflict along the northern frontier a possibility.⁴ Anglo-American relations began to deteriorate during the Civil War. The British decision to recognize Confederate belligerency and to permit the construction of Confederate commerce raiders such as the *Alabama* in British shipyards infuriated American politicians. Many demanded payment after the war for the damage the *Alabama* wrought on American shipping. Some, such as Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, suggested the annexation of Canada as compensation. A rebellion in present-day Manitoba led by Louis Riel further encouraged American politicians and businessmen who supported annexation. Raids across the border by Irish-American Fenians, who hoped to harm Great Britain by striking Canada, exacerbated an already strained relationship. In the 1870s, however, tensions eased. Riel and his followers fled from advancing British and Canadian troops in 1870; American authorities arrested Fenian leaders the same year. The following year, the British agreed in the Treaty of Washington to pay \$15.5 million to settle the *Alabama* claims.⁵

In the mid-1880s, a series of incidents provoked renewed concern about friction along the border. A second Riel Rebellion broke out in Canada near the Saskatchewan River in 1885. The United States assisted in containing the revolt by preventing aid for Riel and his supporters from crossing the border, but the incident provoked concern about future disturbances in the

west, as well as fears that Fenians would try to take advantage of the unrest to raid across the border. The United States and Great Britain also disagreed on the location of the Alaskan boundary and on British pelagic sealing rights in the Bering Sea. The issue creating the most tension, however, was the question of American fishing privileges in Canadian waters. The Treaty of Washington had granted American fishermen the right to fish in Canadian waters in exchange for a cash payment to be determined by an international joint commission. When the commission set the payment at \$5.5 million, a storm of protest broke out in the United States. Congress directed the president to terminate the fisheries agreement in 1883. On 1 July 1885, American fishing rights in Canadian waters ended. Negotiations to settle the dispute dragged. Meanwhile, Canadian authorities seized hundreds of American vessels and arrested their crews, arousing fears that the dispute might lead to violence.⁶

The United States, Great Britain, and Canada worked out a new arrangement on fishing rights in 1888, just as the election of a new administration with aspirations to hemispheric economic dominance and a crisis over pelagic sealing rights threatened to weaken relations further. Newly-elected President Benjamin Harrison and his Secretary of State, James G. Blaine, supported annexation of Canada, but only if Canadians asked to join the Union. They hoped that Canadian economic weakness would eventually produce a petition for admission and therefore rejected Canadian requests for commercial reciprocity. Although Harrison and Blaine favored commercial rather than forcible expansion, a bitter dispute over American and Canadian rights to harvest seals in the Bering Sea raised concerns that force would be used to settle the issue. In 1886, the United States began seizing Canadian sealing vessels operating in waters over which it claimed jurisdiction. Canadian sealers discussed arming their ships in response, prompting the US Congress to empower the President to protect US rights in the area. American and British naval vessels moved into the sealing grounds in 1891, but an arbitration treaty the following year referred the question to an international tribunal for resolution.⁷

The constant tension with Great Britain prompted concern throughout the US Army about a potential conflict along the northern frontier. The Adjutant General's Office issued guidelines in 1887 in order to avoid controversy. Soldiers on furlough were free to travel on Canadian rail lines if they could obtain lower fares, the office declared, but such travel should be 'limited to unarmed individual soldiers and not to include organized forces under command'.⁸ Several officers in the early 1890s also warned of the British threat. Lieutenant Joseph Batchelor advised that war with England 'is always possible so long as she has interests which may conflict with our rights'. He noted that 'her contempt for the rights of others may be

seen throughout the world', and concluded that 'we may expect armed aggression whenever England thinks it will pay'.⁹ Lieutenant Sidney Stuart feared England could send an invasion force as large as 400,000 troops across the border from Canada, although he was more worried about an attack by a much smaller force along the coast.¹⁰ Lieutenant Arthur L. Wagner, later the head of MID, recommended 'a vigorous offensive' against Canada in case of war with Great Britain. He advocated concentrating on Montreal first, not only because the city was 'a necessary stepping stone to the reduction of Quebec', but also because its capture 'would cut Canada in two', allowing the United States to control access to the Great Lakes and to disrupt Canadian trade. He also suggested a second attack against the Niagara Peninsula, including Hamilton and Toronto, and the dispatch of a small army of volunteers from Minnesota and the Dakotas to capture Winnipeg and the railroads passing through the city. The United States could conquer Canada from the Georgian Bay to Quebec, Wagner, concluded, but the capture of Quebec, Nova Scotia, and Vancouver Island would be impossible without a much larger navy.¹¹

American officers were not the only ones who took seriously the possibility of Anglo-American confrontation along the US-Canadian border. British Major-General Thomas Bland Strange tried to deter American ambitions by praising the prowess of Canadian arms. Contrasting the Canadian military's ability to quell quickly the 1885 Riel Rebellion with the American army's inability to defeat Native Americans in the West, he cited the existence of 'a hardihood – I may say an innate genius for war – on the part of the Canadian people which argue ill for the permanent success of an invader'. Nor would the Canadian army be the only source of resistance to an American attack. American commercial cities on the Great Lakes were vulnerable to bombardment from British gunboats, while those along the coasts were defenseless against attacks by the British fleet. Strange warned that 'an attack on Canada by the United States would merit the severest reprisal on the part of Great Britain'.¹²

The complacency of army leaders regarding American involvement in European conflict and the rising tensions in North America suggest that concern about military matters closer to home was a more likely reason for the creation of MID than desire for information on the armed forces of the European powers.¹³ Adjutant General Drum established MID just three months after American fishing rights in Canadian waters ended. Newspaper articles detailing the preparations for the establishment of an intelligence bureau within the War Department described its primary purpose as 'collecting information with regard to the strategic points near the coast of the United States'. Cuba, Central America, and the West Indies were the areas mentioned most frequently in the press as specific targets for the new

bureau's collection efforts, but Canada also received notice.¹⁴ In the years from MID's founding to the beginning of the Spanish-American War, Canada became a focus of the new intelligence organization's efforts.

Although MID bore primary responsibility for collecting intelligence against Canada, the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI), established in 1882, also devoted considerable attention to Canada during its first several years of existence.¹⁵ In 1887, Commodore John G. Walker, the chief of the Navy's Bureau of Navigation and a central figure in the creation of ONI, became concerned that US-Canadian disputes over coastal fishing rights might lead to war with Great Britain. Walker wrote to Commander Charles Gridley in the Office of the Lighthouse Inspector on the Great Lakes, asking him to forward 'information that would be needed both for the protection of our own interests and to injure the enemy in case of war with England'. Walker was particularly interested in the best places to strike in order to blow up the locks on Canadian canals and in the fortifications of Kingston, Toronto, and other key points.¹⁶ Later that summer, Walker personally visited Canada, accompanied by Lieutenant Raymond P. Rodgers, the head of ONI, and two other ONI officers, Lieutenants Seaton Schroeder and Charles C. Rogers. The four officers toured Montreal, Halifax, Toronto, Kingston, and Hamilton. Upon their return to Washington, Rogers wrote intelligence reports on each location, summarizing information on navigation, harbors, canals, railroads, climate, and militia strength.¹⁷

ONI not only collected data on key points in Canada but also assessed Canadian strengths and weaknesses in the event of a war with the United States. In his 'Intelligence Report of the General War Resources of the Dominion of Canada', Rogers claimed that Canada's greatest advantage was the British Navy. 'The chief and most effective force that could be employed against the cities of our northern frontier', he believed, 'would be that portion of the British Navy, which could be sent through the St. Lawrence canals into the Great Lakes.' He warned that Great Britain already possessed a considerable number of vessels capable of entering the Great Lakes. Efforts underway to deepen the locks on the canals would increase the threat to American cities, which 'cannot be protected from bombardment by any battery or land forces'.¹⁸ Rogers discounted the possibility that Canada's French Canadian population might side with the United States in a conflict. He noted that 'the French Canadians cannot be regarded as a dangerous or doubtful class. While they retain their language and religion, they have no connection with France and little political activity. They are to be regarded rather as Englishmen speaking the French language. They have been loyal for a century and have every reason to be satisfied with the present form of government.' French Canadians' loyalty was unlikely to affect American prospects for success anyway, since 'as

soldiers they are probably inferior to men of British descent'.¹⁹ Canada's primary weakness, according to Rogers, was 'its long frontier, out of all proportion to its population and resources'. He recommended concentrating American efforts on destroying Canadian canals and railroads in order 'to sever the Dominion as a whole from communication with England and the provinces from each other'. American armies could then advance from Maine to seize Halifax, from Lake Champlain to capture Montreal, Quebec, and Ottawa, and from the Niagara River to take Toronto and Hamilton.²⁰

The existence of ONI provided a model for the War Department to follow when it created its own intelligence organization. Assistant Adjutant General Major William J. Volkmar, the first head of MID, cited ONI's example as justification for everything he requested to organize the new office. He asked for the detail of six officers, which was, he noted, 'less than half the number considered necessary for the proper performance of similar work in the Naval Bureau of Intelligence'. Volkmar also submitted 'a list of foreign and domestic publications which are subscribed for in the Navy Department Library, for the use of the Bureau of Naval Intelligence. Many of these publications are desirable for use of the Division of Military Information, and but few of them are subscribed for in the War Department Library.'²¹ Finally, he examined the card system ONI employed to organize collected information and adopted it with slight modifications for MID's use.²²

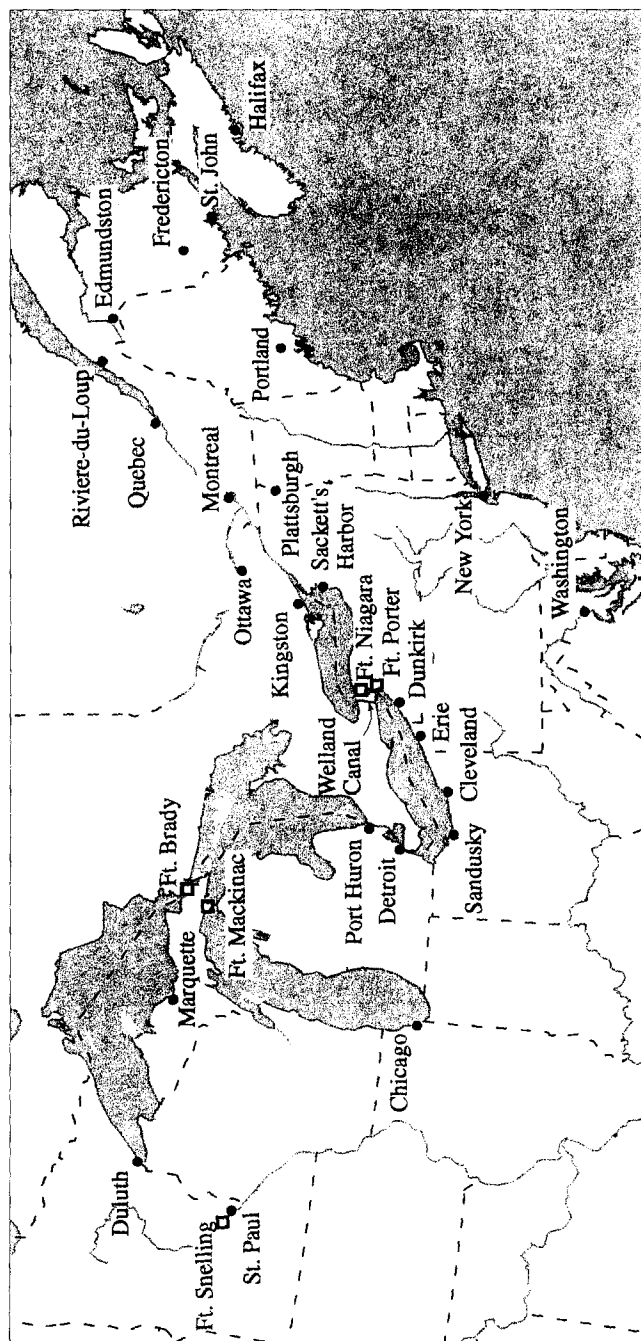
During the 1890s, MID's efforts to model itself after ONI deteriorated into attempts to outdo its older rival. Chief of Naval Intelligence Commander Charles H. Davis Jr complained in 1890, 'This office [MID] is a good deal of a nuisance to us as it is continually pestering us for assistance and information.' After discovering an Army intelligence officer borrowing a report from ONI's files, Davis warned a fellow officer of further Army attempts to pilfer information and complained that 'such an incident as this served to make me doubly cautious, especially in dealings with these army people, who in matters of fact or discretion seem to me to be a lower order of intellect than the mule'. He confided, 'I generally...don't let them go into the file room at all'. Later that same year, Commodore Francis Ramsay, Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, warned all naval attachés not to take Army attachés into their confidence or to 'cooperate with them or give them any information in regard to [your] work'.²³ Captain George P. Scriven of MID noted in 1893 that MID's work was 'of vital and immediate importance, if we are to hold our own in military affairs, not only against foreign governments, but against the Navy, whose admirable Intelligence Office is well known'.²⁴ By 1896, the head of MID was boasting that his office was publishing three times more military information than ONI had ever done.²⁵

One area where MID surpassed its older sibling was in its coverage of Canada. By the late 1880s, ONI had largely lost interest in Canada. When the Anglo-Venezuelan border dispute provoked a war scare in 1895–96, the Naval War College, not ONI, prepared studies of naval conditions on the Great Lakes and plans for an attack against Canada.²⁶ MID, on the other hand, devoted substantial attention to Canada throughout its first dozen years of existence. A careful examination of MID's leadership, methods of collecting information, intelligence objectives, organizational structure, and criteria for officer recruitment reveals that mapping the northern frontier and gathering intelligence on Canada were two of its most important activities.²⁷

The officers selected to lead MID provided one indication of the importance the army attached to acquiring information on Canada. Major Volkmar's successor, Captain Daniel M. Taylor, was the first of a series of division chiefs who gained their position due at least in part to their knowledge of the US-Canadian border. On 3 April 1886, Taylor was detailed for special duty in the Adjutant General's Office, where he acted as *de facto* head of MID. Deeply suspicious of Great Britain, he advocated greater military preparedness for conflict on the northern frontier or along the coastlines. He had published a paper warning that the Pacific coast defenses were vulnerable to attack from a first-class power before coming to MID and would later note: 'Those who know me best prepare to be much bored when I open my mind on Puget Sound, the Welland Canal, or the English possessions in the Caribbean Sea.'²⁸

In August 1886, Taylor received confidential orders from the Secretary of War to conduct an extensive reconnaissance of the eastern portion of the US-Canadian border.²⁹ He traveled from Washington via New York and Chicago to St. Paul, Minnesota. From St Paul, he headed north to Duluth, where he boarded the first of several vessels that carried him through the Great Lakes and down the St Lawrence River. During his journey, Taylor inspected several American military posts along the border, the Welland Canal, and the Canadian cities of Kingston, Ottawa, Montreal, and Quebec (see Map 1). He found that the recent completion of the Canadian Pacific Railroad would allow England to land at Victoria on Vancouver Island 'an army of veteran troops from India, and volunteers from Australia' and transport it by rail to 'within striking distance of our grain fields and flouring mills, and that great artery of transcontinental communication, the Northern Pacific Railroad'. He also believed that Sault Sainte Marie and Detroit were vulnerable to surprise attack. Based upon his observations, Taylor urged an ambitious program of reconnaissance, focusing on the Canadian Pacific and border crossing points. He also recommended mining the Detroit River, consulting with the Adjutants General of states along the

MAP I
KEY POINTS ALONG EASTERN PORTION OF US-CANADIAN BORDER VISITED BY MID OFFICERS, 1886-1896



northern frontier, coordinating with the US Navy on defense of the Great Lakes, and war planning.³⁰ When he returned to Washington, Taylor became the official head of MID and began to implement his plans.

Colonel Thomas M. Vincent, who became the head of MID in October 1895, also demonstrated the importance of knowledge of Canada for MID leadership. Vincent was an experienced staff officer who, at various times after the Civil War, headed the Bureau of the Provost Marshal General, the Bureau for Colored Troops, and the Appointments, Commissions, and Promotions Division of the Adjutant General's Office. He also served as adjutant general of the Departments of Texas and Dakota and on the staff of the General-in-Chief. More importantly, Vincent possessed what he described as 'good personal knowledge of the topography, etc., along the foreign boundaries of the United States'. While serving in the Department of Dakota in 1887, he traveled through Canada on the Canadian Pacific Railway, touring the provinces of Manitoba and British Columbia and the districts of Assiniboia and Alberta. He gathered information that he claimed 'will prove valuable professionally, particularly in connection with my knowledge of the country on this side of the boundary'. He visited the naval station at Victoria, British Columbia, and returned home through Puget Sound. In 1889, Vincent made a month-long trip along the US-Canadian border from Fort Preble, Maine, to Fort Assiniboine, Montana. Even after his appointment as head of MID, Vincent continued to conduct reconnaissance missions into Canada. In 1896, he received confidential instructions from the War Department directing him to visit Halifax in Nova Scotia; St John, Fredericton, and Edmunston in New Brunswick; Rivière du Loup and Levis in Quebec, and Ottawa in Ontario (see Map 1). Of particular interest to the War Department were the fortifications at Halifax, Rivière du Loup, and Levis.³¹

MID's three methods of collecting intelligence also demonstrated an emphasis on Canada. The first was simply to consolidate material from easily available sources. Soon after its creation, MID began gathering reports on Canada's military strength, resources, and lines of communication. In 1886, Drum sent a letter to the heads of all of the Army's functional branches asking for any information 'which it may be desirable for the Government to know in case of sudden war'. He explained that 'it is of vital importance that the Government should know in such case what it could effect and where to look for it, outside of its own workshops and stock on hand; also how quickly it could transport its troops and munitions of war'.³² MID also received the annual reports of the Canadian Minister of Militia and Defence, the Commissioner of the Northwest Mounted Police, the Commissioner of Railways and Canals, and the Commissioner of Marine and Fisheries, as well as the Militia List and the Canadian Almanac.³³

The second method MID used to collect intelligence on Canada was to actively encourage army officers to travel and report their findings to Washington. As Drum noted in 1886: 'There is hardly a journey which can be made by an officer in his own or a foreign country which may not be made productive of valuable results.'³⁴ Drum also asked all of the commanders of the Army's geographic departments to forward reports made by officers of hunting or fishing trips along the border, while Taylor urged the commanding officer of Fort Brady to send one of his subordinates on a hunting trip to collect information on the topography north of Sault Sainte Marie.³⁵ Many of the accounts that officers submitted of their leaves of absence detailed Canadian fortifications, including Lieutenant George P. Scriven's confidential report on the fortifications at Kingston in 1887, Captain Samuel M. Mills' study of the fortifications at Halifax in 1890, Lieutenant H.L. Hawthorne's follow-up on the fortifications at Halifax in 1892, and Captain William C. Manning's description of Sugar Island in 1892.³⁶

The third and most important method MID employed to collect intelligence on Canada was to send army officers over the border on clandestine reconnaissance missions and prepare maps based on their findings. Before the creation of MID, the War Department lacked any authentic maps of the US-Canadian border.³⁷ The lack of accurate maps was keenly felt during an era that emphasized the strategic importance of topographical and geographical knowledge. The desire for more topographical information had already prompted the creation of Britain's first military intelligence organization. Seeking to procure maps and information regarding the theater of operations during the Crimean War, the War Office established the Topographical and Statistical Department in 1855.³⁸ Christopher Andrew has argued that 'peacetime intelligence gathering was treated largely as an offshoot of mapmaking' in both the War Office and the Admiralty prior to the mid-1870s.³⁹

Advocates of the creation of MID in 1885 also saw cartography as a crucial element of intelligence. They attributed Prussia's success during the Franco-Prussian War to its superior information regarding French topography.⁴⁰ Similarly, the prize winning essay in the *Journal of the Military Service Institution* for 1891 emphasized the value of maps and verbal descriptions of topographical features for military operations. Although the author focused on the collection of topographical information in the field during wartime, he also recommended detailing officers to prepare itineraries and procure the latest topographical maps during trips abroad in peacetime.⁴¹ As late as 1924, MID officers cited the need for greater topographical knowledge as the impetus for the creation of the organization.⁴² Topography and mapping thus became the focus of MID's collection efforts concerning Canada.

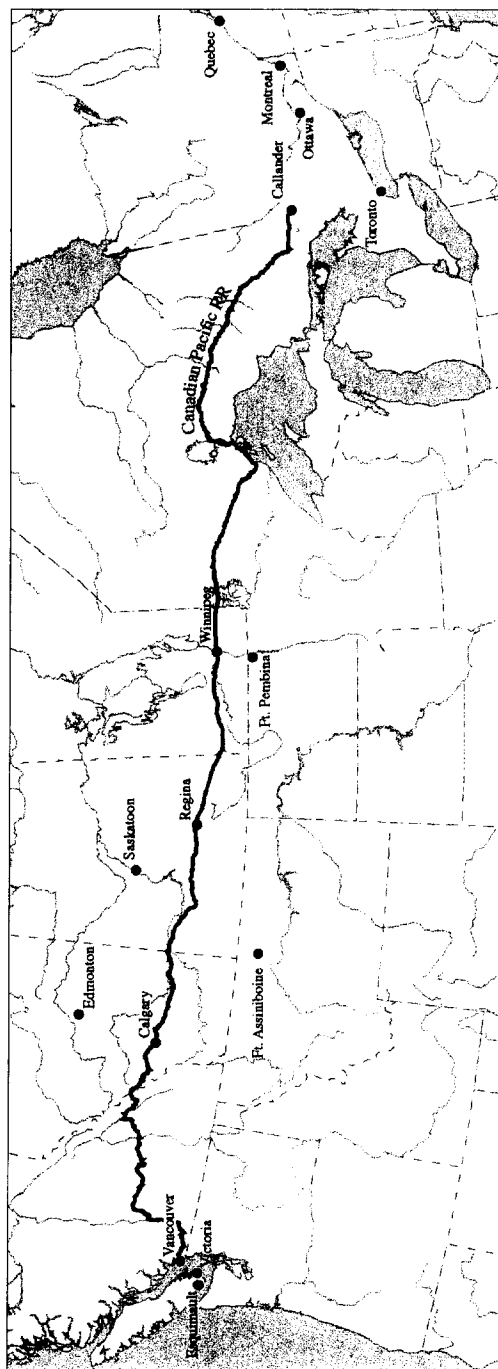
Initially, MID relied on officers already stationed along the border to collect the intelligence and produce the maps it required. In 1887, it sent a confidential letter to the commanding officers of several northern frontier posts ordering them to organize reconnaissance missions into Canada, led by officers carefully selected for their 'tact and ability'.⁴³ One of the officers who responded to MID's request was Lieutenant Andrew S. Rowan. While stationed at Fort Pembina in Dakota Territory, Rowan proposed crossing the border to measure the distance between the fort and Winnipeg, Manitoba, 'with a view to making a map of the lines of communication in the vicinity of this station'. His commanding officer was uneasy about approving a reconnaissance in foreign territory, however, and granted Rowan a leave of absence so that he could make his trip independently. Accompanied by Lieutenant E. S. Chapin, Rowan traveled to Winnipeg, noting the topography and the location and character of the roads along the way. He later incorporated the information into a map of the area which he forwarded to MID.⁴⁴

In addition to Canadian topography, MID's intelligence objectives included the transportation facilities, industrial resources and production, and available strength and effectiveness of the militia and volunteers in Canada.⁴⁵ As Rowan's statement of the goal of his 1887 mission made clear, some of the primary targets of MID's reconnaissance efforts were Canadian lines of communication and transportation. In any conflict along the frontier, Canadian railroads could speed British reinforcements to threatened sectors, while Canadian canals might allow British gunboats to enter the Great Lakes, threatening American trade and exposing American cities to bombardment. Consequently, MID concentrated on mapping the rail lines and canals north of the border and developing plans to disrupt their operation in the event of war.

Canadian railroads were a subject of interest for MID from virtually the creation of the organization. The initial completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway on 7 November 1885 threatened to alter the strategic balance in North America. Army officers feared that Great Britain could now transport troops from Liverpool to western Canada within two weeks, or land troops in Victoria, move them quickly to Winnipeg, and strike south into Minnesota (see Map 2). The following year, Assistant Adjutant General J. C. Kelton urged Drum to purchase a subscription to Poor's *Manual of the Railroads of the United States* for MID. To justify the purchase, Kelton pointed out that the publication provided 'every important fact connected with every railroad in the United States, Mexico, and Canada'.⁴⁶

The strategic importance of the Canadian Pacific prompted MID to launch the first in a series of missions to map the road and identify its most vulnerable points in 1889. To conduct the reconnaissance, Taylor turned to

MAP 2
 ROUTE OF THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILROAD AND KEY POINTS ALONG WESTERN PORTION OF US-CANADIAN
 BORDER, 1885-1898



Rowan, who had acquired valuable knowledge of the area along the railway's route during his trip across the border two years earlier. During the summer of 1889, Rowan conducted a detailed examination of the entire line of the Canadian Pacific. He identified Rat Portage and Winnipeg as the two most important points on the road. Rat Portage, where the railway crossed the Winnipeg River, was, according to Rowan, 'perhaps the most vital point of the entire line'. Damage inflicted there would be difficult to repair, thus halting traffic for a long time. Winnipeg was the capital of Manitoba and, in Rowan's view, 'the metropolis of the Canadian northwest'. Moreover, it was 'the greatest railroad center the Dominion has' and therefore 'a strategic point of unusual importance'. Rowan described routes of attack from locations in the United States to these points and other vulnerable ones on the road.⁴⁷ In the years that followed Rowan's initial effort, MID prepared several reports detailing routes of advance to the Canadian Pacific and descriptions of every trestle and bridge on the road.⁴⁸

After inspecting the Canadian Pacific, Rowan reported on the area bounded by the cities of Kingston, Ottawa, and Montreal; the defenses of Halifax, Nova Scotia, and Victoria, British Columbia; and the topography and roads near Sault Sainte Marie in 1890.⁴⁹ His espionage efforts in Canada earned him accolades within the War Department. Superior officers and even the Secretary of War praised his record in the performance of 'important and confidential duty beyond any of the territorial boundaries of the country' and expressed their appreciation of his energy, tact, ability, and industry.⁵⁰ A later chief of MID described Rowan's reports on Canada as 'very valuable'.⁵¹

Railroads were not the only internal improvements among MID's intelligence objectives in Canada; canals also figured prominently. American army officers feared that Canadian canals along the Saint Lawrence River would allow British gunboats to quickly enter the Great Lakes and attack the undefended American cities along the lakeshores.⁵² In anticipation of such an eventuality, MID sketched the roads leading to the most important canals along the frontier and identified assailable points.⁵³ The focus of Taylor's trip along the border in 1886 had been a careful inspection of the Welland Canal. He recommended an attempt to capture the canal if possible, rather than destroy it and irritate the local inhabitants.⁵⁴ Rowan, in addition to his other duties in 1890, prepared a plan for the destruction of the Canadian Canal opposite Adams Island.⁵⁵ MID's plans to seize or destroy the canals in the event of war with Canada might explain Secretary of War Redfield Proctor's 1890 recommendation against extensive fortifications on the Great Lakes despite his admission that the cities along the lakes were 'defenceless against naval attack'.⁵⁶ Canadian efforts to deepen the canals only heightened MID's concerns. In response to

an MID inquiry in 1893, Lieutenant Colonel Peter C. Hains of the Corps of Engineers warned that a number of Great Britain's ironclads would soon be able to enter the Great Lakes and that an attack 'would most likely be disastrous in its consequences'. He urged the head of MID to plan for the destruction of the canals before war was declared and it was too late.⁵⁷

Changes in MID's organizational structure also suggest the importance the army attached to gathering information on Canada. By 1892, MID had made, in the words of the Adjutant General's office, 'commendable progress'.⁵⁸ It had gathered valuable information on the strength and location of the military forces, the roads, waterways, canals, and railroads of Canada and other nearby countries.⁵⁹ Much of this intelligence was sent to the Chiefs of Army Bureaus, to the Headquarters of the Army, and to the artillery, infantry, and cavalry schools at Forts Monroe, Leavenworth, and Riley respectively.⁶⁰

MID's early espionage efforts against Canada were not, however, a total success. Reconnaissance missions across the border were still conducted on an ad hoc basis and provided only limited intelligence. MID members admitted that few of the maps their organization had produced were sufficiently detailed to be useful for campaign planning.⁶¹ They also conceded that the organization 'is not yet either in the scope of its work or in the rank and number of its personnel, abreast of the section of the general staff of foreign countries known as "Intelligence Departments"'.⁶²

To increase MID's effectiveness, the War Department reorganized the division in 1892. As part of the reorganization, the Northern Frontier Section was created as one of four functional subdivisions. The new organizational structure increased the amount of detailed military and topographical information available on Canada by providing direction and system to MID's collection efforts. Commanders of the army's geographic departments identified the regions most likely to become theaters of war. Based on this guidance, MID specified the information that the line officers conducting the reconnaissance missions should collect. The new structure also increased the accessibility of the intelligence already gathered. The officer in charge of the section was required to categorize, arrange, and card all of the information in MID's possession regarding Canada. The information was updated yearly.⁶³

One of the functions of the newly formed Frontier Section was planning for war with Canada. In 1892, MID sent a confidential circular letter to commanders of the army's geographical departments asking them to report on 'the best plan to be adopted by the United States military authorities in case of war with Great Britain to protect our northern frontier'. It received replies from Major Generals O. O. Howard in the Department of the East, Nelson A. Miles in the Department of the Missouri, and Thomas H. Ruger in the Department of California. It also received plans for invasions of

Canada from at least nine other officers.⁶⁴ Howard's plan was soon designated 'Military Problem No. 1'. During the next several years, the Frontier Section, working in conjunction with the departmental commanders, devoted most of its efforts to systematically collecting and filing information in support of the war plan.⁶⁵

Following the 1892 reorganization, MID adopted a more rigorous procedure for mapping the border in order to acquire the detailed information on crossings and terrain features necessary for campaign planning. The goal, according to the head of MID, was 'to furnish the Commanding General with the information he would have a right to expect in the event of rumors of war with Canada'.⁶⁶ The new system divided the territory to be mapped into sections measuring one degree of latitude by one degree of longitude and, using publicly available maps, prepared 'skeletons' of each section showing the lines of communication and drainage. Each officer conducting reconnaissance was then assigned a section and ordered to pass over all the roads in order to obtain key topographical information and correct the skeleton sheet where necessary. Officers were also instructed to draw sketches, shoot photographs, and take measurements to provide data on the location, armament, and garrisons of all fortifications in the area.⁶⁷ The value of the detailed topographical work became clear when MID reconnaissance revealed that one-third of the roads shown on the skeleton maps did not exist and many that did exist did not appear on any map.⁶⁸

Using the new mapping system, Rowan mapped about 1,800 square miles along the Canadian frontier over a period of three months in 1893.⁶⁹ The next year, Rowan, accompanied by Lieutenant William C. Brown, returned to scout the terrain and select artillery sites as part of plans for crossing a large force into Canada near Ogdensburg, New York.⁷⁰ In 1895, Rowan examined the defensive works being constructed in Esquimaux Harbor, mapped 600 square miles of the southern end of Vancouver Island, and examined the forts at Point Levis opposite Quebec.⁷¹ By autumn 1895, MID had mapped 10,886 square miles of Canadian territory and added nearly 20 publicly available maps of Canada to its collection.⁷²

Finally, the criteria used to select officers for duty in MID reveal the organization's focus on the covert collection of information regarding the northern frontier. The new emphasis on topographical accuracy and war planning within MID placed a premium on recruiting officers with surveying and mapping skills and knowledge of Canada. Rowan's partner during a five-month study of the US-Canadian border in 1894, Lieutenant William C. Brown, had reconnoitered and mapped a section of the Rocky Mountains northwest of St Mary's Lake in Montana and surveyed the Navajo reservation in Arizona before receiving orders to report for duty in MID. Brown remained on duty with MID as Chief of the Map and Frontiers

Section until November 1896.⁷³ Lieutenant John T. Haines had also attracted notice for his special topographical abilities before he was assigned to map sections of the frontier in 1894.⁷⁴ Lieutenant Charles R. Noyes, who conducted two confidential reconnaissance missions for the Department of the East in 1896 and 1897, earned his assignment by collecting notes, photos, and maps on the politics, military geography, and military forces of Canada during the 1890s. He also made trips into Canada when possible. Based on his studies, he produced a series of essays with titles such as: 'Observations of a Military Character in Canada' (1890), 'Recent Political Events in Canada' (1892), 'The St. Lawrence River from Lake Ontario to Montreal' (1893), and 'Strategic Points (Canadian)' (1895). A copy of the first of the essays was in the MID files as of 1895.⁷⁵

Officers were selected for reconnaissance duty based on not only their topographical ability and knowledge of Canada but also their discretion. 'Tact', noted Taylor, 'and ability to preserve silence are qualities quite as necessary for work of this kind as the more professional attainments of the engineer.'⁷⁶ MID's efforts to gather information on Canada took place in the context of a growing emphasis on secrecy in international relations. A series of minor espionage scandals in Europe and the increasingly aggressive nationalism of the major European powers prompted War Department officials to take pains to keep the Department's more sensitive information secret. In 1887, Secretary of War William C. Endicott approved a new telegraph code to insure the security of the War Department's communications.⁷⁷ Endicott and his successor Redfield Proctor recognized that MID's responsibilities were 'delicate' and 'difficult and confidential'.⁷⁸ Performing such duties while trying, as the head of MID in 1891 put it, 'not to attract attention to the Division anymore than need be', required officers who possessed discretion and tact.⁷⁹

MID was not, however, always successful in its attempts to attract discrete and tactful officers. In 1897, the temporary head of the Division, Lieutenant J. R. Williams, complained that during two successive years, reconnaissance operations ground to an abrupt halt because newspapers in Washington published the names and regiments of officers reconnoitering in Canada. Apparently the officers had informed certain friends of their missions and the friends informed the press. In a memo to the Secretary of War, Williams stressed the importance of recruiting MID members based on 'their ability to conceal the actual nature of their business on foreign soil'.⁸⁰

Despite the indiscretions of some of its officers, MID continued to spy on Canada. By 1897, the Frontier Section had mapped 18,494 square miles of Ontario and 648 square miles of the southern end of Vancouver Island. It had also prepared a special map in two sheets covering the portion of Canada from the Lake of the Woods to the Rocky Mountains showing 14

different routes for striking vulnerable points along the Canadian Pacific Railway. During the summer of 1897, five officers focused their attention first on Ontario and portions of British Columbia, including the new fortifications at Victoria and Esquimault, and later on New Brunswick and the fortifications at Halifax, Nova Scotia.⁸¹ By the end of the season, they had compiled the information necessary to complete MID's knowledge of an unbroken strip of territory 75 miles wide from Detroit to Quebec and provided the organization with maps the value of which was 'beyond computation in the event of war'.⁸² By 1898, 6 of the 14 officers assigned to MID were engaged entirely in reconnaissance duty.⁸³

In contrast, the successors to the Topographical and Statistical Department within the British War Office, the Intelligence Branch (1873–85) and the Intelligence Department (1886–1904), concentrated their collection efforts on Europe, India, Central Asia, and Africa. After its victory in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78, Russia became the focus of War Office intelligence organizations. Intelligence officers gathered information on Russian threats to British holdings in the Middle East and, more importantly, in India. They also toured Europe, Turkey, and French North Africa, observing fortifications, noting troop movements, and mapping telegraph and cable lines.⁸⁴ Several Intelligence Department officers visited the United States and Canada in the late 1880s and early 1890s to report on American military affairs and Canadian defenses.⁸⁵ One of their fellow officers later suggested, however, that the trips were larks and just some of the many 'interesting and often very pleasant trips abroad' taken by intelligence officers 'at trifling cost to their own pockets'.⁸⁶ Concerns arising from the Anglo-Venezuelan boundary dispute prompted more War Office reconnaissance missions along the Canadian border and the American coast in 1896.⁸⁷ Ultimately, however, the Venezuelan crisis produced a rapprochement in Anglo-American relations that reduced each country's need to spy on the other. In any case, British military intelligence in the late nineteenth century simply had too many concerns elsewhere in the world to devote significant attention to the United States.

By the 1890s, the American military's strategic worldview was also beginning to expand. Other areas of the world besides Canada attracted MID's attention. Lieutenant George P. Scriven had reconnoitered Mexico and Cuba as early as 1889 and MID recommended the detail of officers for similar duty in other South American countries with growing frequency during the 1890s. The head of MID complained in 1896 that 'many of these countries are sealed books to us'.⁸⁸ MID also increased the number of its military attachés from five in 1889 to ten in 1897, including eight attachés in Europe, one in Mexico City, and one in Tokyo.⁸⁹ The

beginning of the Spanish–American War confirmed the shift in MID’s geographic priorities by forcing it to suspend its reconnaissance work against Canada. MID had not resumed its mapping of the northern frontier as of 1903.⁹⁰

Recounting the early history of MID clearly reveals the important role that friction between the United States and Canada played in the creation of the US Army’s first peacetime military intelligence organization. During the first dozen years of MID’s existence, Canada was one of the primary targets of its attention. MID devoted significant resources to mapping the Canadian border, restructured its organization in part to increase the efficiency of those scouting expeditions, and selected officers to lead MID and conduct its reconnaissance missions based on their topographical skills, their knowledge of Canada, and their ability to keep their work quiet.

NOTES

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1. The latter explanation seems to have originated in a 1902 history of the MID written by Assistant Adjutant General W.A. Simpson. Simpson claimed that the Secretary of War desired important information on a particular foreign army for immediate use. Drum found not only that the information was unavailable but that obtaining it would take so long that it would be practically useless once collected. See AAG W.A. Simpson, ‘Brief Outline of the Origin, Growth, and Work of the Military Information Division, Adjutant General’s Office’, 21 Feb. 1902, File 639-13, Box 1, Entry 296 – General Correspondence 1903–19, War College Division and War Plans Division, Record Group 165 – Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, National Archives, College Park, MD [hereafter abbreviated as E-296, RG 165, NA], 1. Unlike the rest of the events detailed in his history, Simpson provides no evidence to support his account of the creation of MID. Later historians have repeated Simpson’s explanation, although several have expressed doubts about its veracity. See Elizabeth Bethel, ‘The Military Information Division: Origin of the Intelligence Division’, *Military Affairs* 11 (Spring 1947) p.17; Allison Ind, *A Short History of Espionage* (New York: McKay 1963) p.111; US Congress, Senate, Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with respect to Intelligence Activities, ‘The Evolution and Organization of the Federal Intelligence Function: A Brief Overview (1776–1975)’, report prepared by Harold C. Relyea, 94th Cong., 2nd sess., 1976 pp.63–4; Marc B. Powe, *The Emergence of the War Department Intelligence Agency, 1885–1918* (Manhattan, KS: Military Affairs 1975) pp.13–15; Nathan Miller, *Spying for America: The Hidden History of US Intelligence* (NY: Paragon 1989) p.161; Jeffrey T. Richelson, *A Century of Spies: Intelligence in the Twentieth Century* (NY: Oxford UP 1995) p.7. Bruce Bidwell has stressed the need for an organization to process the increasing flow of military information as the

- reason for the creation of MID, arguing that there was little conflict between the United States and its continental neighbors and that the Atlantic insulated the country against military threats from Europe. Bruce W. Bidwell, *History of the Military Intelligence Division, Department of the Army General Staff: 1775–1941* (Frederick, MD: UP of America 1986) pp.51–2. Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones has also emphasized the importance of managing information flows as a motive for the establishment of MID. Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *American Espionage: From Secret Service to CIA* (New York: Macmillan 1977) p.26.
2. Letter from Lt. T.B.M. Mason, 11 Nov. 1884, Reel 14, Philip H. Sheridan Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC; Draft of Annual Report, Commanding General of the Army, 1884, Reel 87, Sheridan Papers.
 3. Maj. John B. Babcock to the Adjutant General, 28 Sept. 1893, File 639-3, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA, 4.
 4. Richard A. Preston, *The Defence of the Undefended Border: Planning for War in North America, 1867–1939* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP 1977) pp.95–148, provides the best summary of the North American military implications of Anglo-American tensions in the late nineteenth century. See also Kenneth Bourne, *Britain and the Balance of Power in North America, 1815–1908* (Berkeley: U. of California Press 1967) pp.251–351; Richard A. Preston, *Canada and 'Imperial Defense' A Study of the Origins of the British Commonwealth Defense Organization, 1867–1919* (Durham, NC: Duke UP 1967) pp.53–259; and Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada* (Edmonton: Hurtig 1985) pp.85–115. For a slightly later period, see John Gooch, *The Prospect of War: Studies in British Defence Policy, 1847–1942* (London and Portland, OR: Frank Cass 1981) pp.52–72. More generally, see James Morton Callahan, *American Foreign Policy in Canadian Relations* (NY: Macmillan 1937) pp.354–492; Charles Callan Tansill, *Canadian–American Relations, 1875–1911* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP 1943); Robert Craig Brown, *Canada's National Policy, 1883–1900: A Study in Canadian-American Relations* (Princeton UP 1964); C.P. Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict: A History of Canadian External Policies*, Vol. 1, 1867–1921 (Toronto: Macmillan 1977) pp.1–121; and John Herd Thompson and Stephen J. Randall, *Canada and the United States: Ambivalent Allies*, 2nd ed. (Athens, GA: U. of Georgia Press 1997) pp.41–69. For a historiographical perspective, see the review essay by Reginald C. Stuart, 'Continentalism Revisited: Recent Narratives on the History of Canadian–American Relations', *Diplomatic History* 18 (Summer 1994) pp.405–14.
 5. In addition to the sources cited in note 4, see Walter LaFeber, *The American Search for Opportunity, 1865–1913*, Cambridge History of American Foreign Relations, Vol. 2 (Cambridge: CUP 1993) pp.60–63.
 6. Preston, *Defence of the Undefended Border* (note 4) pp.99–103.
 7. Ibid. p.103, 118–119; LaFeber, *The American Search for Opportunity* (note 5) pp.78–9.
 8. AAG J.C. Kelton to Quartermaster General, 9 Feb. 1887, Roll 60, M-565.
 9. Lt. Joseph B. Bachelor Jr, 'A United States Army', *Journal of the Military Service Institution* 13 (1892) pp.60–1.
 10. Lt. Sidney E. Stuart, 'The Army Organization, best adapted to a Republican Form of Government, which will ensure an Effective Force', *Journal of the Military Service Institution* 14 (1893) pp.242–3.
 11. Lt. Arthur L. Wagner, 'The Military Geography of Canada', *Journal of the Military Service Institution* 13 (1892) pp.429–65.
 12. Maj.-Gen. Strange, 'Canadian Defense', *Journal of the Military Service Institution* 12 (1891) pp.142–6.
 13. In *Defence of the Undefended Border*, Preston argues that 'the development of professional intelligence sources in the United States had a relevance to a possible war with Canada that has hitherto been entirely overlooked'. Preston, *Defence* (note 4) p.109. Joan Jensen also emphasizes the desire to collect intelligence on Canada as a motive for the establishment of MID. Joan M. Jensen, *Army Surveillance in America, 1775–1980* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP 1991) pp.49–51. Although Canada did not create a permanent military intelligence

organization until 1900, and then only a weak one, concerns about threats from south of the border prompted what little intelligence activity occurred during the nineteenth century. Wesley K. Wark, 'The Evolution of Military Intelligence in Canada', *Armed Forces and Society* 16 (Fall 1989) pp.78–9. On Canadian intelligence before 1945, see S.R. Elliott, *Scarlet to Green: A History of Intelligence in the Canadian Army, 1903–1963* (Toronto: Canadian Intelligence and Security Association 1981); Wesley K. Wark, 'Security Intelligence in Canada, 1864–1945: The History of a "National Insecurity State"' in Keith Neilson and B.J.C. McKercher (eds.) *Go Spy the Land: Military Intelligence in History* (Westport, CT: Praeger 1992) pp.153–178; and Graeme S. Mount, *Canada's Enemies: Spies and Spying in the Peaceable Kingdom* (Toronto: Dundurn Press 1993). Most of the other literature on Canadian-American intelligence relations tends to focus on the period after the Second World War and emphasizes two themes: Canada's role as a complementary but secondary member of the Western intelligence effort against the Soviet bloc and the constraints on Canadian independence as a result. See, for example, James Littleton, *Target Nation: Canada and the Western Intelligence Network* (Toronto: Lester and Orpen Dennys/CBC Enterprises 1986); Stuart Farson, 'Schools of Thought: National Perceptions of Intelligence', *Conflict Quarterly* 9 (Spring 1989) pp.52–104, esp. pp.71–8; Jeffrey T. Richelson and Desmond Ball, *The Ties that Bind: Intelligence Cooperation between the UKUSA Countries – the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Unwin Hyman 1990), esp. pp.82–95, pp.312–29; and J.L. Granatstein and David Stafford, *Spy Wars: Espionage and Canada from Gouzenko to Glasnost* (Toronto: Key Porter Books 1990); and the Summer 2000 issue of *Intelligence and National Security* devoted to American-British-Canadian intelligence relations from 1939 to the present: *Intelligence and National Security* 15/2 (Summer 2000).

14. 'A Coming War Department Change: A Bureau of Information to Be Established', *Washington Star*, 1 Oct. 1885; 'More Work for General Drum', *Republican*, 2 Oct. 1885; clipping from *Army and Navy Journal*, 10 Oct. 1885; all reprinted in File 639-1, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA.
15. On the early years of ONI, see Robert G. Angevine, 'The Rise and Fall of the Office of Naval Intelligence, 1882–1892: A Technological Perspective', *Journal of Military History* 62 (April 1998) pp.291–312.
16. Letter from Cmdr John G. Walker to Cmdr Chas. V. Gridley, 25 July 1887, John G. Walker Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington DC. Jeffrey Dorwart cites Walker's letter, but provides the wrong date. Jeffrey M. Dorwart, *The Office of Naval Intelligence: The Birth of America's First Intelligence Agency, 1865–1918* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press 1979) pp.28–9.
17. Lt. Charles C. Rogers, 'Intelligence Report on Montreal, Canada', July 1887; *ibid.* 'Intelligence Report-Halifax', July 1887; *ibid.*, 'Intelligence Report-Toronto', August 1887; *ibid.*, 'Intelligence Report-Kingston', August 1887; *ibid.*, 'Intelligence Report-Hamilton', Aug. 1887, all in Record Group 8 – Intelligence and Technical Archives, Naval Historical Collection, Naval War College, Newport, RI [hereafter abbreviated as RG 8, NHC, USNWC]; Dorwart, *Office of Naval Intelligence* (note 16) p.29.
18. Lt. Charles C. Rogers, 'Intelligence Report of the General War Resources of the Dominion of Canada', 1887, RG 8, NHC, USNWC pp.357–8.
19. *Ibid.* pp.33–4.
20. *Ibid.* p.355, p. 359, p. 363.
21. Letter from AAG William J. Volkmar to the Adjutant General, 21 Jan. 1886, Roll 59, Microfilm M-565, Letters Sent by the Adjutant General's Office, 1800–1890, National Archives, Washington, DC.
22. Military Information Division, 'Memorandum for the Adjutant General, US Army', 11 Sept. 1891, in File 639 (Misc. 1885–99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 2.
23. Dorwart (note 16) p.44; Peter Karsten, *The Naval Aristocracy: The Golden Age of Annapolis and the Emergence of Modern American Navalism* (NY: Free Press 1972) pp. 254–5. John

- Votaw claims that the War Department cooperated well with the Navy and the ONI, but provides no evidence. John F. Votaw, 'United States Military Attachés, 1885-1919: The American Army Matures in the International Arena' (Ph.D. diss., Temple University 1999) p.5.
24. Capt. George P. Scriven, 'A General Statement of a Method of Classification of Military Information Suitable to the Use of a Card Index and to the System of Classification by Countries', 26 Jan. 1893, in File 639 (Misc. 1885-99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 4.
 25. Asst. Adj. Gen. Thomas M. Vincent, 'Memorandum for the Honorable Secretary of War relating to the Division of Military Information', 13 Oct. 1896, in File 639 (Misc. 1885-99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 6-7.
 26. Dorwart (note 16) p.53.
 27. Although Canada was a focus of MID's activities from 1885 to 1898, spying on Canada was not the only reason the organization was established. MID also followed European tactical and organizational developments and monitored the National Guard's readiness, in Drum's words, 'to prevent domestic violence of magnitude'. On MID's activities in Europe, see, in addition to the sources in note 1. Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *American Espionage: From Secret Service to CIA* (NY: Free Press 1977) p.27, and Votaw (note 23). There is no adequate study of the influence that fear of civil disorder had on the creation of MID, but for Drum's quote, see Circular letter from AG R.C. Drum to Adjutants General of the states, 13 Nov. 1886, Appendix B of AAG W.A. Simpson, 'Brief Outline of the Origin, Growth, and Work of the Military Information Division, Adjutant General's Office', 21 Feb. 1902, File 639-13, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA.
 28. Capt. D.M. Taylor to Secretary of War, 28 March 1882; George B. Cosby, Adjutant General, State of California, to Capt. D.M. Taylor, 24 Nov. 1885; Capt. D.M. Taylor to Secretary of War, 23 March 1891; all in File 1547 ACP 1874, Document File, Appointments, Commissions, and Personnel Branch, Adjutant General's Office, Record Group 94 - Records of the Office of the Adjutant General, National Archives, Washington DC [hereafter abbreviated as file number, RG 94, NA].
 29. Lt. William C. Brown, 'Summary of Military Information Collected in Northern Frontier Section and Map Section, Military Information Division', 11 Oct. 1895, in File 639 (Misc. 1885-99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 1.
 30. Taylor's itinerary included the following locations: New York, Chicago, St Paul, Ft Snelling, Duluth, Marquette, Ft Brady, Ft Mackinac, Winona, Port Huron, Detroit, Sandusky, Cleveland, Erie, Dunkirk, Ft Niagara, Ft Porter, Ft Ontario, Sackett's Harbor, Kingston, Ottawa, Montreal, Plattsburg Barracks, Quebec, and Portland. He also received separate instructions to investigate the Welland Canal. AG R.C. Drum to Capt. D.M. Taylor, 12 Aug. 1886, File 1547 ACP 1874, RG 94, NA. For Taylor's report, see Capt. D.M. Taylor, 'Extracts from a Journey of Observation to the Northern Frontier', 1899, RG 8, NHC, USNWC. The quotation is from page 2. The late date on the report indicates when it was filed in the Naval War College Archives. Daniel Taylor's brother, Captain Henry C. Taylor, was President of the Naval War College at the time. Preston, *Defence* (note 4) p.133.
 31. T.M. Vincent to Adjutant General, 1 May 1890; T.M. Vincent to Adjutant General, 4 Aug. 1887; and AG George Ruggles to Col. T.M. Vincent, 14 July 1896, all in File 708 ACP 1879, RG 94, NA.
 32. AG R.C. Drum to Heads of War Department Bureaus, 23 Nov. 1886, Roll 60, Microfilm M-565 - Letters Sent by the Adjutant General's Office, 1800-1890, National Archives, Washington DC [hereafter abbreviated as M-565, NA].
 33. Brown, 'Summary of Military Information Collected in Northern Frontier Section', 11 Oct. 1895, in File 639 (Misc. 1885-99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 6.
 34. Drum to Heads of War Department Bureaus, 23 Nov. 1886, Roll 60, M-565, NA.
 35. AG R.C. Drum to Commanding Generals, Military Departments, 23 Nov. 1886, Roll 60, M-565, NA. Taylor also noted that an operation to examine crossing points along the St Clair river 'can be easily disguised under the garb of a fishing trip'. Taylor, 'Extracts from a

- Journey of Observation to the Northern Frontier', 1899, RG 8, NHC, USNWC, 5, 9.
36. Unfortunately, virtually all of the MID's actual reports and files on Canada have been destroyed. The documents cited are described in Babcock to the Adjutant General, 28 Sept. 1893, File 639-3, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA, 5-6; Brown, 'Summary of Military Information Collected in Northern Frontier Section', 11 Oct. 1895, in File 639 (Misc. 1885-99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 5-6.
 37. Military Information Division, 'Memorandum for the Adjutant General', 11 Sept. 1891, in File 639 (Misc. 1885-99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 6-7.
 38. Thomas G. Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence, 1870-1914: The Development of a Modern Intelligence Organization* (Frederick, MD: UP of America 1984) pp.20-4.
 39. Christopher Andrew, *Her Majesty's Secret Service: The Making of the British Intelligence Community* (NY: Viking 1986) p.12.
 40. 'A Coming War Department Change. A Bureau of Information to Be Established', *Washington Star*, 1 Oct. 1885, reprinted in File 639-1, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA.
 41. Lt. Henry A. Reed, 'The Terrain in its Relation to Military Operations', *Journal of the Military Service Institution* 13 (1892) pp.38-42.
 42. Col. J. H. Reeves, 'The Military Intelligence Division, War Department General Staff', 4 Sept. 1924, File 10560-328, No. 186, E-296, RG 165, 4.
 43. 'Memorandum for the Lt. General Commanding the Army', 17 March 1902, File 639-14, Box 1, E-296, RG 165; Bidwell, 52.
 44. Lt. A.S. Rowan to Paymaster General, 7 Nov. 1887, File 367 ACP 1885, RG 94, NA.
 45. Babcock to the Adjutant General, 28 Sept. 1893, File 639-3, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA, 6.
 46. On the Canadian Pacific Railroad, see James E. Vance Jr, *The North American Railroad: Its Origin, Evolution, and Geography* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP 1995) pp.253-77. On the strategic importance of the CPR, see Taylor, 'Extracts from a Journey of Observation to the Northern Frontier', 1899, RG 8, NHC, USNWC, 2; and Preston, *Defence* (note 4) pp.100-1. For Kelton's recommendation, see Asst. AG J.C. Kelton to AG R.C. Drum, 5 Aug. 1886, Roll 60, M-565, NA. Canadian Army officers recognized the value of railroads for defense. In 1894, Lt.-Col. T.C. Scoble presented a paper before the Canadian Military Institute arguing that 'the construction of railways in Canada during the past twelve years has enormously increased the defensive power of the Dominion'. He advocated the organization of a railway corps and extensive reliance on railways to defend Canada against a possible American invasion. See Lt.-Col. T.C. Scoble, 'The Strategic Value of Canadian Railways', *Journal of the Military Service Institution* 15 (1894) pp.161-7.
 47. Capt. D.M. Taylor to Adjutant General, 4 Nov. 1889, File 367 ACP 1885, RG 94, NA. For Rowan's report, see Lt. Andrew Rowan, 'Report on the Canadian Pacific Railway, 1890', File WCD 3071, Box 16, E-296, RG 165, NA. Quotes are from pages 6, 10, and 12.
 48. Babcock to the Adjutant General, 28 Sept. 1893, File 639-3, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA, 6.
 49. Brown, 'Summary of Military Information Collected in Northern Frontier Section', 11 Oct. 1895, in File 639 (Misc. 1885-99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 2.
 50. Maj. C.I. McKibbin to Lt. A.S. Rowan, 4 Feb. 1893; Lt. Col. H.A. Theaker to whom it may concern, Feb. 1893; and Capt. D. M. Taylor to Lt. A.S. Rowan, 6 Jan. 1891, in File 367 ACP 1885, RG 94, NA.
 51. Maj. J.B. Babcock, Memorandum, 8 March 1893, File 367 ACP 1885, RG 94, NA.
 52. Lt. Joseph B. Bachelor Jr, 'A United States Army', *Journal of the Military Service Institution* 13 (1892) pp.58-61.
 53. Babcock to the Adjutant General, 28 Sept. 1893, File 639-3, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA, 6.
 54. Taylor, 'Extracts from a Journey of Observation to the Northern Frontier', 1899, RG 8, NHC, USNWC, 14.
 55. Brown, 'Summary of Military Information Collected in Northern Frontier Section', 11 Oct. 1895, in File 639 (Misc. 1885-99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 2.
 56. *Report of the Secretary of War, 1890*, 51st Cong., 2nd sess., 1890, H. Ex. Doc. 1, pt. 2, serial 2831, 8.

57. Lt. Col. Peter C. Hains to Col. Robert Williams, 13 April 1893, in File 639 (Misc. 1885–99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 1.
58. Adj. Gen. John C. Kelton, 'Memorandum Outlining the Functions of the Adjutant General's Department and Tracing the Origin and Development of an Intelligence Division as Part of the Office of the Adjutant General', 1892, in File 639-2, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, 4.
59. Asst. AG R. Williams, 'Memorandum for the Secretary of War', 7 May 1892, in File 639-2, E-296, RG 165, NA, 2.
60. Military Information Division, 'Memorandum for the Adjutant General', 11 Sept. 1891, in File 639 (Misc. 1885–99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 5. MID provided books, pamphlets, and manuscripts on a wide range of topics to the Infantry, Cavalry, and Artillery Schools. For details, see the notes from the commandants of the schools: Lt. Col. Royal T. French to Gen. John C. Kelton, 4 Sept. 1891, and Col. S. F. Townshend to Adjutant General, 5 Sept. 1891, in File 639 (Misc. 1885–99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA.
61. Maj. J. B. Babcock, 'Memorandum', 27 June 1893, in File 639 (Misc. 1885–99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165; Lt. J.R. Williams, 'Memorandum for the Secretary of War – Summary – Reconnaissances of Foreign Territory Likely to Become the Theater of Military Operations', 29 March 1897, in File 639 (Misc. 1885–99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 1–2.
62. Adj. Gen. John C. Kelton, 'Memorandum Outlining the Functions of the Adjutant General's Department and Tracing the Origin and Development of an Intelligence Division as Part of the Office of the Adjutant General', 1892, in File 639-2, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, 4.
63. Lt. J.R. Williams, 'Memorandum for the Secretary of War – Summary – Reconnaissances of Foreign Territory Likely to Become the Theater of Military Operations', 29 March 1897, in File 639 (Misc. 1885–99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, 2–4. For the overall reorganization of MID, see War Department General Order 23, 18 March 1892. The other subdivisions created in 1892 were the Section of Progress in the Military Arts, the Section of Spanish American Countries, and the Section of Militia and Volunteers. See Babcock to the Adjutant General, 28 Sept. 1893, File 639-3, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA; Asst. Adj. Gen. Thomas M. Vincent, 'Memorandum for the Honorable Secretary of War Relating to the Division of Military Information', 13 Oct. 1896, in File 639 (Misc. 1885–99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 2.
64. 'Memorandum for the Lt. General Commanding the Army', 17 March 1902, File 639-14, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA, 1.
65. In 1896, for example, MID prepared a plan for 'certain special and confidential field work in the Department of the East' and forwarded it to the Commanding General of the Department for execution. Asst. Adj. Gen. Thomas M. Vincent, 'Memorandum for the Honorable Secretary of War Relating to the Division of Military Information', 13 Oct. 1896, in File 639 (Misc. 1885–99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, 7. For general background, see Brown, 'Summary of Military Information Collected in Northern Frontier Section', 11 Oct. 1895, in File 639 (Misc. 1885–99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 2–3. In the early 1920s, Col. J. 'Buster' Sutherland-Brown, director of Canadian military intelligence, returned the favor by preparing extensive plans for the invasion of the United States. See James Eayrs, *In Defence of Canada: Vol. 1, From the Great War to the Depression* (U. of Toronto Press 1964) pp.70–8, 323–8; Preston, *Defence* (note 4) pp.215–7.
66. Maj. John B. Babcock to the Adjutant General, 28 Sept. 1893, File 639–3, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA, 5.
67. Lt. J.R. Williams, 'Memorandum for the Secretary of War – Summary – Reconnaissances of Foreign Territory Likely to Become the Theater of Military Operations', 29 March 1897, in File 639 (Misc. 1885–99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 4; Lt. Carl Reichmann, 'Notes on the Military Information Division', 14 Sept. 1897, File 639-5, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA, 19–20.
68. Brown, 'Summary of Military Information Collected in Northern Frontier Section', 11 Oct. 1895, in File 639 (Misc. 1885–99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 3–4.
69. Lt. A.S. Rowan to Adjutant General, 9 Dec. 1893, in File 639 (Misc. 1885–99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 1–2. Rowan began his work at Merrickville, Ontario, and mapped all of

- the area between the railroads leading from the St Lawrence at Prescott and Brockville to Ottawa.
70. Brown, 'Summary of Military Information Collected in Northern Frontier Section', 11 Oct. 1895, in File 639 (Misc. 1885-99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 5.
 71. Ibid.
 72. The number of maps of Canada held by MID increased from 87 in 1893 to 104 in 1895. Compare Babcock to the Adjutant General, 28 Sept. 1893, File 639-3, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA, 6, and Brown, 'Summary of Military Information Collected in Northern Frontier Section', 11 Oct. 1895, in File 639 (Misc. 1885-99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 7. For the area mapped by MID, see Brown (note 29) 4.
 73. Lt. W.C. Brown to Adjutant General, 29 Jan. 1895; Lt. W.C. Brown to Adjutant General, 17 Nov. 1896; Memorandum, MID, Adjutant General's Office, War Department, 4 May 1895; Adjutant General George Ruggles to Capt. William C. Brown, 21 Nov. 1896, in File 3348 ACP 1881, RG 94, NA.
 74. Adjutant General to Lt. J.T. Haines, 10 May 1894, File 3681 ACP 1886, RG 94, NA.
 75. C.R. Noyes to Adjutant General, Officer's Individual Report, 9 Dec. 1891; C.R. Noyes to Adjutant General, Officer's Individual Report, 10 Jan. 1894; C.R. Noyes to Regimental Adjutant, Officer's Individual Report, 30 June 1895; C.R. Noyes to Adjutant General, Officer's Individual Report, 30 June 1897; in File 3705 ACP 1879, RG 94, NA. For Noyes' report in the MID files, see Brown, 'Summary of Military Information Collected in Northern Frontier Section', 11 Oct. 1895, in File 639 (Misc. 1885-99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 6.
 76. Taylor, 'Extracts from a Journey of Observation to the Northern Frontier', 1899, RG 8, NHC, USNWC, 9.
 77. AG R.C. Drum to Assistant AG J.C. Kelton, 25 Jan. 1887, Roll 60, M-565, NA.
 78. William C. Endicott to Capt. D.M. Taylor, 1 March 1889; Sen. Redfield Proctor to Gen. J.C. Kelton, 25 May 1892; in File 1547 ACP 1874, RG 94, NA.
 79. Capt. D.M. Taylor to Secretary of War, 23 March 1891, File 1547 ACP 1874, RG 94, NA. Former Secretary of War Redfield Proctor also noted the importance of tact and discretion among MID officers. Sen. Redfield Proctor to Gen. J.C. Kelton, 25 May 1892, File 1547 ACP 1874, RG 94, NA.
 80. Lt. J.R. Williams, 'Memorandum for the Secretary of War - Summary - Reconnaissances of Foreign Territory Likely to Become the Theater of Military Operations', 29 March 1897, in File 639 (Misc. 1885-99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 7.
 81. Ibid. 4-6.
 82. Unsigned report to the Adjutant General, 28 Sept. 1897, File 639-6, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA, 6; Lt. Carl Reichmann, 'Notes on the Military Information Division', 14 Sept. 1897, File 639-5, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA, 20.
 83. Memorandum for Lt. Gen. Commanding the Army, 17 March 1902, File 639-14, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA, 1.
 84. Fergusson, *British Military Intelligence* (note 38) pp.55-60, 63, 90-5; Andrew, *Her Majesty's Secret Service* (note 39) p.11, 27.
 85. Bourne, *Britain and the Balance of Power in North America* (note 4) p.325; Preston, *Defence* (note 4) p.101, 121.
 86. Maj.-Gen. Sir C. E. Callwell, 'War Office Reminiscences', *Blackwood's Magazine* 190 (1911), 158, 24, quoted in Andrew, *Her Majesty's Secret Service* (note 39) p.24.
 87. Bourne, *Britain and the Balance of Power in North America* (note 4) pp. 329-30.
 88. On Scriven, see File 3034 ACP 1878, RG 94, NA; Babcock to the Adjutant General, 28 Sept. 1893, File 639-3, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA, 6-7; and Reichmann, 'Notes on the Military Information Division', 14 Sept. 1897, Box 1, File 639-5, E-296, RG 165, NA, 31-32. For the quotation, see Vincent, 'Memorandum for the Honorable Secretary of War Relating to the Division of Military Information', 13 Oct. 1896, in File 639 (Misc. 1885-99), Box 3, E-296, RG 165, NA, 3-4;
 89. In 1897, MID had attachés stationed in London, Paris, Berlin, Rome, Brussels, Vienna,

Madrid, Berne, Mexico City, and Tokyo. The post in St Petersburg was vacant. Unsigned report to the Adjutant General, 28 Sept. 1897, File 639-6, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA, 2.

90. 'Memorandum for the Lt. General Commanding the Army', 17 Mar. 1902, File 639-14, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA, 1-2; Unsigned memorandum, 11 June 1903, File 639-16, Box 1, E-296, RG 165, NA. Graeme Mount suggests that Canada's expulsion of Spanish diplomats gathering intelligence on the United States from Montreal during the Spanish– American War contributed to improved Canadian-American relations. Mount, *Canada's Enemies* (note 13) p.9. In 1907, however, the Army War College proposed a complete review and update of the offensive operations to be undertaken against Canada in the event of war with Great Britain. Maj. C.J. Barley, 'Memorandum for Officers of the Army War College', 28 Oct. 1907, in File 639 (Misc. 1900–10), Box 4, E-296, RG 165.